2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

V. HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THEIR OWN HOME

a. Setting up a household.

When husband and wife have been separated from his parents, they set up a household for themselves. They ask the village headman to get a house-site. They give him beer and food. The husband cuts trees and brings them from the forest; he cuts thatching grass in the forest, or buys it from somewhere. He fixes nine posts in the ground; thereupon he puts up three roof-beams; at three places he fixes double cross-beams, he fixes forty rafters, and in three places, at the top, in the middle, and at the bottom of these, he puts cross-laths. Thereupon he makes the rafter-framework and after this thatches. Then he makes a wattle and daub wall; having done this he puts up something to keep separate the place for the ancestors. The wife then kneads earth and smears this on; afterwards she fills the house inside with earth and plasters all smooth, and she makes a fire-place. The husband makes a door, of wood or of thin bamboo-slips. In the house they have two bedsteads, a wooden mortar and pestle, a winnowing-fan, baskets, brooms, earthenware vessels, big and small, ladles made of wood or of pumpkin-shell, kedali axe, chisel, adze, sickle, knife, plough-beam, yoke, plough and plough-share, flute, bow and arrows, battle-axe, sword and dancing-drum and kettle-drum. Poor people have no battle-axe, sword, dancing-drum, or kettle-drum.

The sacred closet is for the ancestors to stay hidden in. Women belonging to other men are not permitted to go in there; and some people do not permit even their own daughters to go in there, that is, when they have been married. In this closet they make a small enclosure, and this is the real place for the ancestors to stay hidden in. In the closet money is also kept. On the backside of the house they have the homestead field; here they cultivate maize. And in front of the house towards the village street they have the court-yard. This they fence securely in on the four sides. They make two openings for going out and in, one is the homestead field door and one the village street door.

The man builds a shed for the cows and bullocks and buffaloes, a fold for the goats and sheep and a sty for the pigs. The fowls and the cat stay in the house, and the dog stays somewhere on the verandah, to guard the house.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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bunch of "sal" flowers, there a village-group sitting at a feast of rice and rice-beer. We were also invited to examine some more wall-paintings, walls which were proud to bear representations of steam-engines and aero-planes, and marking our reluctance to be so near modernism, our Santal friends expressed profound surprise.

The yard is scrupulously clean, and, to translate a Bengali saying, "You might pick vermilion if some dropped upon it." There is sometimes the finish of a cement but generally everything is plastered over with mud and cow-dung. Jutting out into the lane are the pig-styes and poultry-yard. The room at the entrance is the "Gohal" (*cattle-shed*). Almost invariably a stench will repel one's olfactory nerves, but then one must not forget that the Santals like the Hindus almost worship the cows; and the first item in their annual Harvest Home is the "Gohal puja," when the cows are anointed with vermilion and adored as their best earthly possession. There, one will find the oil-press and the rice-husking "dheñki." In the houses of the more affluent, a separate outer house can be found which gives the combined service of a kitchen and poultry-yard. Drinking-water drawn from the neighbouring springs is stored in earthen pitchers, about two cubits and a half in height, and kept in a conspicuous place.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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798 824 Gosainera, a female deity. This Mowa tree is known as the Lady of the Grove. But it was noticed in the Jahirsthan both in Dumka and Godda area, that at the base of several other Sal trees there were stones which represented the Pukri and other Bongas.

342 787 825 [782] **The House :** Before constructing the house they test the site by tying a rooster on the site for five days, and if within these five days the cock loses its life they give up the place thinking it to be undesirable. If the rooster remains alive they begin the construction of the house after sacrificing a fowl to Marang Buru.

342 782 Before entering the new house the owner of the house brings a mug of water after bathing in a stream nearby and pours a little water in each room. In the room facing east the owner puts three cups of Sal leaves on the floor and pours "Handi" (rice beer) in those cups taking the name of Marang Buru and Pilchu Haram and utters the following words :—

"I have constructed the house by taking your names. See that every thing remains alright".

342 [351] [245] [784] Mango and jackfruit trees are planted in the adjoining field in the belief that prosperity will come. During the house ceremony widows and divorced women cannot enter the house.

The house and its contents : The house of the Santals is not of varied design and the plan of the main structure is always the same. In some can be found a courtyard in the centre, and rooms on two sides and mud walls on the other two sides. An average house of the Santals measures 15 to 18 feet in the length and 10 to 12 feet in width.

In the Daminikoh area and outside this area of the Santal Parganas two types of houses can be seen.

4: Biswas D, E-3,4 (1931-1945) 1956
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342 ventilation except a few holes high up on the wall. In front of the house the eaves of the roof are elongated which serves as a covered verandah. The floor of the house is a little raised above the ground, being filled up with earth. This is trampled down hard and made smooth with mud mixed with cowdung.

342 Every Santal house in which the head of the
778 family lives has a 'Bhitar'. This is a part of a room
769 partitioned by a low wall which runs out from the side wall some six to nine feet into the com-
[609] partment. It is a kind of stall, and is sacred to the ancestors. Here food is kept for the ancestors and no
[784] stranger is permitted inside. The married daughter of the house, who in her girlhood was allowed entry is now not permitted inside, because she now belongs to another family and might cause religious pollution.

343 There is a separate shed for cattle. Within this
231 shed in some houses special arrangement is made to keep pigs. In one corner of the cattle-shed two mud-walls about three feet in height are built, to form a small rectangular sty. Over it bamboo sticks and branches of trees are placed, so that pigs cannot escape by jumping. A hole is made in one of the walls and bamboo sticks are placed there in such a way that by raising these sticks the pigs can easily come out and enter. But in some villages in the Godda Damin are found the pig-sheds built outside the house. In this case the walls of about 5 feet and the roof are made of thatch.

342 Inside the house on the verandah the "Dhenk"[1]
252 (rice-husker) is fixed and a mill-stone is kept. Except
351 during cold season, when the inside is warm, the
[407] Santals generally stay outside on the courtyard both day

[1] [Erratum: this should read "'Dhenki'". Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. ix -- Analyst]

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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and night. As a rule they cook their food outside, but always have a fire-place inside. During the cold season they generally cook their food inside, the result being that the house specially at night, is suffocatingly full of smoke and every thing becomes covered with soot. This does not, however, seem to affect the Santals much. In the bed-room they store their rice and all other belongings, and the fowls are kept too in that room at night. It is, of course, not possible to keep such a house clean, even if they tried to do so.

Agriculture :—The Santals before becoming agriculturists were probably in the hunting stage. Still, nothing pleases them so much as to be out for hunting, they even now observe the "Dehiri hunting", which is an annual hunt. During the time of the annual hunt the Dehiri priest performs certain ceremonies to propitiate "Sin Bonga" to avert calamity during hunting. All these suggest that prior to becoming agriculturists the Santals were in the hunting stage. At present the Santals are typical agriculturists. There is no authentic record when the Santal first started tilling the soil. Rev. Bodding in his memoir, "How the Santals live" has mentioned their first attempt at cultivation in the following words :—

"It is just possible that one of their first attempts to get something out of the soil may have been something like what is now called 'kurau', a mode of cultivation that is said to have been used also by Santals in former years, but is not practised by them at the present time, so far as is known. It is, however, still kept up by the Paharias living on the hills of the Santal country. A piece of jungle is cut down high up